

CLAIMS

1. A method of enriching a population of cells in those cells which produce an antibody that recognises an antigen of interest, comprising:
 - 5 a) bringing said population into contact with an antibody that recognises a marker which is essentially unique to those cells present in the population which are capable of producing an antibody, said antibody being attached to a first fluorescent label;
 - b) bringing said population into contact with the antigen of interest;
 - c) bringing said population into contact with a sample comprising an antibody that
10 recognises said antigen, said antibody being attached to a second fluorescent label; and
 - d) separating from the population those cells which are detectable by virtue of being associated with the first and second fluorescent labels.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein parts a), b), and c) are performed simultaneously and the performance optionally comprises at least one wash step.
3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein parts a) and b), or a) and c), or b) and c), are performed simultaneously and optionally comprise at least one wash step.
20
4. The method of any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein parts a), b) and c) are performed consecutively in any order, and wherein each performance optionally comprises at least one wash step.
- 25 5. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein part a) additionally comprises bringing said population into contact with an antibody that recognises a second marker essentially unique to those cells present in the population which are capable of producing an antibody, said antibody being labelled with a third label.
- 30 6. The method of any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the separation of the cells producing an antibody that recognises the antigen of interest is performed using fluorescence activated cell sorting.
7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims additionally comprising:

- a) culturing a plurality of those cells associated with the antigen-antibody-particle complex;
- b) screening the cultured cells to identify those cells capable of producing an antibody which recognises an antigen of interest; and
- 5 c) isolating said antibody directly or indirectly from the cells.

8. An antibody prepared directly or indirectly according to the method of any one of claims 1 to 7.

- 10 9. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an antibody according to claim 8 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

10. The use of an antibody according to claim 8 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of a disease or condition.

15

11. An antibody prepared directly or indirectly according to the method of any one of claims 1 to 7 for use in therapy.